

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

CHEROKEE FOR THE CHARGE FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1-3

TAGS: UR, US

SUBJECT: SECRETARY-DOBRYNIN MEETING FEBRUARY 28

1. DOBRYNIN CAME IN AT HIS REQUEST TO DELIVER A LETTER FROM BREZHNEV TO THE PRESIDENT (SEPTTEL).
2. MIDDLE EAST: IN RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY'S QUESTION, DOBRYNIN SAID HE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED INFORMATION ON THE ASSAD CONVERSATIONS IN MOSCOW BUT HOPED TO CONVEY A REPORT SHORTLY.
3. ASAT: THE SECRETARY SAID THE US IS PREPARED TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS IN APRIL AT GENEVA. DOBRYNIN REPLIED THAT, AS BREZHNEV HAD SAID IN A PREVIOUS LETTER, ASAT TALKS SHOULD COVER NOT ONLY SATELLITE VERSUS SATELLITE, BUT ALSO THE SHUTTLE SYSTEM VERSUS SATELLITE SITUATION.

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4. SPARKMAN LETTER ON COMPLIANCE: THE SECRETARY CONVEYED TO DOBRYNIN EXCERPTS FROM A 2/28 STATEMENT MADE BY SENATOR SPARKMAN, SFRC CHAIRMAN, PUTTING INTO THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD THE PAPER PREPARED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT ON THE RECORD OF COMPLIANCE WITH SALT I. DOBRYNIN REPLIED WITH SATISFACTION TO SPARKMAN'S STATEMENT ABSOLVING THE SOVIET UNION OF THE CHARGE OF CHEATING.

5. MATZOH PACKAGES: (THE SECRETARY S REMARKS ARE RE-PORTED SEPTEL.) DOBRYNIN AT FIRST REPLIED WITH A DIVERSION ABOUT DISSIDENTS, MANY OF THEM JEWS, RECEIVING CERTIFICATES FROM ABROAD AND BUYING WHISKEY AT DOLLAR STORES. BROUGHT BACK TO THE ISSUE, HE SUGGESTED THAT AMBASSADOR TOON RAISE IT IN MOSCOW. HE THEN ADDED MORE SERIOUSLY THAT WHEN RELATIONS WERE GOOD, SUCH SMALL MATTERS COULD BE MORE EASILY RESOLVED, BUT WHEN RELATIONS ARE BAD, PEOPLE IN MOSCOW ASK WHY THEY SHOULD ACCOMMODATE THE US.

6. SALT: DOBRYNIN EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER REPORTS THE US DID NOT INTEND TO PROCEED WITH A TREATY AND ITS RATIFICATION THIS YEAR. THE SECRETARY REPLIED THAT IT WAS THE PRESIDENT'S INTENTION TO PROCEED EXPEDITIOUSLY WITH NEGOTIATION (WHICH COULD BE POSSIBLE BY THE END OF MAY) AND TO SEND THE TREATY FOR RATIFICATION SOON THEREAFTER. DOBRYNIN SAID IT WOULD DEPEND UPON THE PRESIDENT EXERTING HIS LEADERSHIP STRONGLY; THE SECRETARY SAID HE WOULD DO SO.

7. HORN: DOBRYNIN EXPRESSED REGRET THAT THE EFFECT OF THE DEPARTMENT'S 2/25 STATEMENT RESPONDING POSITIVELY TO BREZHNEV'S SPEECHES WAS SPOILED BY APPENDING A WARNING ON THE HORN. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION, DOBRYNIN ASKED: "WHAT ELSE COULD WE DO? WE HAVE TRANSMITTED ASSURANCES
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FROM THE ETHIOPIANS AND CUBANS THAT THEY WILL NOT INVADE SOMALI TERRITORY." HE ADDED: "WHY ARE THE SOMALIS SO RESISTING THE IDEA OF WITHDRAWING FROM THE OGADEN?

8. THE SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT THE LARGE NUMBER OF CUBANS TRANSPORTED TO ETHIOPIA AND PARTICIPATING IN COMBAT WAS TROUBLING TO MANY AMERICANS. TO THIS, DOBRYNIN ANSWERED BY COMPARING THE SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA WITH THE SITUATION IN ANGOLA, WHERE NOTHING HAD PREVENTED THE US FROM ENTERING INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MPLA WHEN THE SU DID SO. HE ALSO MADE THE POINT THAT THE SOVIET UNION BROKE WITH SOMALI NOT TO ACHIEVE MILITARY/ STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE, BUT BECAUSE THE SOMALIS WANTED TO LAUNCH AN AGGRESSIVE ATTACK. ANYWAY, HE ADDED, IT MADE NO SENSE TO CRY ALARM, AS MANY PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY DID, ABOUT THE DANGER OF SOVIET FORCES CUTTING THE OIL LINE OF COMMUNICATIONS. "HOW COULD WE DO IT?" HE ASKED. "THIS WOULD CLEARLY BE AN ACT OF WAR AND, IN CASE OF WAR, SUCH ACTIONS WOULD BE DWARFED IN THE SIGNIFICANCE." THE CONCEPT OF LINES OF COMMUNICATION, AS THROUGH THE SUEZ CANAL AND THE RED SEA, HE ARGUED, WERE ANACHRONISMS IN THE PRESENT PERIOD.

9. US WEAPONS TO IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA: DOBRYNIN SAID THIS WAS A MATTER OF CONCERNED DISCUSSION EVEN UP TO THE POLITBURO LEVEL. THE SECRETARY REFERRED TO SOVIET SHIPMENT OF WEAPONS TO IRAQ AS A SOURCE OF CONCERN TO IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA, BUT DOBRYNIN ARGUED THESE CONCERNS WERE NOT PROPORTIONATE TO IRAQ'S CAPABILITIES. CHRISTOPHER

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